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Why and how to promote cooperative negotiation in a context of competitive globalization: A review of literature

Chérine Soliman*
Nicolas Antheaume*

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(*) LEMNA, Université de Nantes

Why and how to promote cooperative negotiation in a context of competitive globalization: a review of literature

Cherine Soliman, CEO Pearl Negotiation, Cairo, EGYPT / Associate Researcher, LEMNA,
University of Nantes, FRANCE

Nicolas Antheaume, Professor, School of Economics and Business, LEMNA University of
Nantes, FRANCE

Abstract

The economic environment which we know created a reality rich in conflict inside and outside the organization. This article defends the opinion that in such a context cooperation is needed. It presents cooperative negotiation as an important tool for conflict management, dispute management and building sustainable competitive advantages. This article addresses academics through the review and analysis of the most cited literature related to cooperative negotiation. It argues for and defends, based on existing research, the choice of cooperative negotiation. It also addresses professionals and provides arguments and guidelines for organizational cooperation enhancement.

Keywords: *Cooperation, Organizational Performance, Negotiation, Social Dilemma, Negotiator's Dilemma*

Introduction

Over the last decades professionals around the world have been managing their business in a context of constant economic downturns or recessions, or in the face of unprecedented economic challenges. While globalization has been the answer to many problems, enabling the realization of economies of scale through the creation of interdependent economic networks between countries, organizations as well as individuals, it has also increased the risk of chain reactions. The positive side of globalization is that organizations have increased their effectiveness and efficiency in the fields of production, assembly,

distribution and shipment around the world, at better cost, enabling competitive product prices to maintain and expand market share. However there is also a downside to this. For global risk analysts interconnectivity and increased impact on the environment, which are a result of globalization, have also produced despair. The World Economic Forum Global Risk 2012 Report (Fortune, 2011) “based on 469 social experts and industry leaders” mentions severe income disparity, chronic fiscal imbalances, natural disasters such as the 2011 earthquake in Japan, floods in Thailand, political uncertainty in China and the Middle East. Globalization has compounded the types and level of business risks.

This new economic context has increased the pressure on the social dilemma with which managers are confronted “should organizations cooperate for mutual and global posterity, or should they compete to ensure and maximize on their winnings in this particularly egoistic environment”. Both sides of the equation seem very logical and debatable. The opinion of the authors is that organizations have decided to cooperate competitively. This corresponds to a form of distorted cooperation, without any cooperative essence.

Organizations cooperate through the creation of strategic alliances such as joint ventures, mergers, acquisitions to increase their financial wealth, R&D potential, market access, and product portfolio. The aim of such cooperation might also be to minimize political and economic risk. Yet we believe that this happens without the essence of cooperation. If we go back to the definition of cooperation in very simple words, we propose to frame it as follows: “I should deploy all my efforts to satisfy my needs then I will do all I can to help achieve satisfy yours (not at my expense but through value creation).”(Harvard Business Essentials 2003)

However today’s organizations manage their cooperation in a way that we will describe as follows: “I shall deploy all my effort to achieve my maximum potential. As long as you are beneficial to me I will show a level of support and commitment, yet behind the scene I am getting ready to compete and win you over when and if needed”. In our opinion this corresponds to a distorted version of cooperation. It carries and delivers more competition than cooperation. As a matter of fact, in the academic literature it has often been described as cooptation, a concept popularized by Brandenburger and Nalebuff (1996).

Why? A first answer might be that resources are scarce. If I win alone I might just make it; if I share the resources we will be both uncompetitive to others who choose not to cooperate (this corresponds to the essence of the negotiator's dilemma to which we will come back below).

This situation raises many questions: "is this helping?"; "will we succeed by keeping pretending to cooperate?"; "what will be the repercussions on the long term?"

Organizations seem very busy coping with the speed of environmental changes. They are required to adapt, adjust, accommodate and manage. The speed with which economic and environmental impacts hit them makes them more capable of focusing and delivering results on the short term. However some managers are conscious that short term planning without attention to the long term can lead to disaster.

What we are saying is that our world is connected, and yet we do not collaborate well with one another although economic problems occurring globally threaten the security of businesses around the world. It is the belief of the authors that answers lie in building intra and inter-organizational cooperative grids or networks, integrating different perspectives and capabilities to create workable solution to complex problems. In one word the answer to our global economic problem lies in "Authentic Cooperation".

To achieve authentic cooperation organizations will need to leverage internal and external human and social capital; starting with the development of intra-organizational cooperation. The extent of this practice should have a huge impact on organizational outcome and provide benefits beyond the internal environment of the organization. Indeed if internally cooperative organizations apply their practices at the level of inter-organizational alliances, in the form of external strategic partnership and alliances, spillover effects should impact the whole economy.

To sum up, our actual economic environment created a reality rich in conflict inside and outside of organizations. This context places cooperative negotiation as an important tool for conflict management, dispute management or even in more simple words the most suitable method for reaching agreement.

Based on the credo, that cooperative negotiation should be promoted, the purpose of this article is dual:

On one hand it addresses professional guides and helps managers to understand the value and the impact of cooperation, but most importantly it shows how to install a cooperative culture in their organization as a strategic asset necessary for the organization's future, so as to augment its value and competitive advantage.

Meanwhile it also addresses academics by presenting them a consolidation of the most cited authors who addressed the question of "how to promote cooperation in negotiation?"

Negotiation success depends on individual performance. Individual behavior impacts the potential of a negotiation. Our project aims at improving individual performance in negotiation leading to an improvement in the overall organizational level of cooperative performance.

To achieve the objectives of this article, we have divided it into four parts representing four central questions with an accumulative effect:

In part 1 we ask ourselves why cooperation is overlooked and why promote it. We shed the light on the individual, organizational and societal struggle between the need to cooperate and the pressure to compete. We also briefly explain the social dilemma and the negotiator's dilemma. In part two we focus on the context in which organizations evolve and on its impact on intra-organizational cooperation. We try to determine when cooperation takes place in organizations. In part three we look at individuals, with their dilemma, inside of the organization and start to work on identifying what are the suggestions in the literature that would enable these individuals, under dilemma struggle to cooperate. In part 4, based on our review of literature, we conclude and recommend based what organizations need to do in order to foster cooperation in today's global business environment.

Part 1: Why is cooperation overlooked and why promote cooperation?

By definition: *“Social dilemmas are situations in which individual rationality leads to collective irrationality. This is, reasonable behavior leads to a situation in which everyone is worse off than they might have been otherwise. Many of the most challenging problems we face, from the interpersonal to the international, are at their core social dilemmas”* Kollock (1998).

For more explanations, Kollock continues by saying that: *“All social dilemmas are marked by at least one deficient equilibrium. It is deficient in that there is at least one other outcome in which everyone is better off. It is equilibrium in that no one has an incentive to change their behavior. Thus, at their worst, social dilemmas exemplify the true meaning of tragedy: “the essence of dramatic tragedy” wrote Whitehead, “is not unhappiness. It resides in the solemnity of the remorseless working of things” (quoted in Stroebe & Frey 1982). A group of people facing a social dilemma may completely understand the situation, may appreciate how each of their actions contribute to a disastrous outcome, and still be unable to do anything about it. The most severe social dilemmas are also characterized by a dominating strategy that leads to a deficient equilibrium. A dominating strategy is a strategy that yields the best outcome for an individual regardless of what anyone else does. The compelling, and perverse, feature of these dilemmas is that there is no ambiguity about what one should do to benefit oneself, yet all are hurt if all follow this rational decision. However, not all social dilemmas involve dominating strategies”*. (Kollock, 1998)

This very brief explanation, when applied to the organizational context points to which extend social dilemmas can lead to under-efficient solutions which have an impact on performance.

By this we mean that when an individual in an organization uses a dominating strategy to yield the best individual outcome possible, regardless of its impact or consequence on the rest of the organization itself, his individual choice will leave everyone, including himself, worse off. As previously stated this could lead to: increased conflict, damaged relationship, poor organizational performance. Game theory is useful to understand this.

Dilemma Game illustrative example:

Game theory is used to model a wide variety of economic settings. The choice settings in which economists apply game theory are generally small number settings in which individual decisions

and welfare are interdependent. That is to say, in economic games each person's welfare depends, in part, on the decisions of the other individuals "in the game". Again, the basic problem occurs when the pursuit of self-interest by each leads to a poor outcome for all. To elaborate we refer to the work by Axelrod (1984) *"In the Prisoner Dilemma game, there are two players. Each has two choices, namely cooperate or defect. Each must make the choice without knowing what the other will do. No matter what the other does, defection yields a higher payoff than cooperation. The dilemma is that if both defect, both do worse than if both had cooperated. As illustrative example: A district attorney knows that two prisoners are indeed guilty of a crime, he doesn't have acceptable evidence to convince a jury. The alleged criminals know this. The district attorney presents the following choice problem to each of the prisoners separately. The prisoners are kept separated. Each is given the choice of not confessing or confessing. Game summarized figure 1. If neither confess = both cooperate, each will get a one year sentence, payoff = 3 for each. If one confesses = defect/cooperate, the confessor goes free, and the other is sentenced for 5 years, payoff = payer one gets 0, players 2 gets 5. If both confess = both defect, each will get three years, payoff = 1 for each"*

		Player one	
		Cooperate Not Confess	Defect Confess
Player two	Cooperate Not Confess	(1 year, 1 year) R= 3 R= 3 Reward for mutual cooperation	(5 years, 0 years) S=0, T= 5 Sucker payoff Temptation to defect
	Defect Confess	(0 years, 5, years) T=5, S= 0	(3 years, 3 years) P=1, P=1 Punishment for mutual defect

Figure 1, Prisoner Dilemma Summary, Axelrod, 1984

Figure 1 tell individuals that you maximize your individual gains only by competing against a cooperative person; it also says that the scenario of mutual cooperation is the best scenario for mutual satisfaction. It is also very important to be aware that if you initiate cooperation and that this is not reciprocated by the other you are defeated. Lack of information, or deceptive information

and the uncertainty that ensues on what the other party will do (the two prisoners are not able to communicate with each other) plays a key role in yielding a suboptimal outcome.

The essence of the prisoner's dilemma can be transferred to the field of negotiation and is known as "The Negotiator's Dilemma".

Based on the literature in negotiation you are either creating value or claiming value. To relate this to the negotiator's dilemma we need to explain that *"In the value-creating view negotiators work primarily to increase the available resources, to find joint gains or "win-win" solutions, wherein all the parties will benefit. Negotiators must act cooperatively, and successful negotiators are open and creative. They share information, communicate clearly, maintain a cooperative attitude and focus on developing common interests"* (Lax, 1986). On the other hand *"In the value-claiming view negotiators work primarily to claim the largest share of the disputed goods. To be successful negotiators must engage in hard bargaining; they must "start high, concede slowly, exaggerate the value of concessions, minimize the benefits of the other's concessions, conceal information, argue forcefully on behalf of principles that imply favorable settlements, make commitments to accept only highly favorable agreements, and be willing to outwait the other fellow."* (Lax, 1986)

The tension between cooperative value-creating strategies and competitive value-claiming strategies is the Negotiator's Dilemma.

Based Lax and Sebenius (1986), the Negotiator's Dilemma can be summarized as follow

- 1- If both parties involved in a negotiation cooperates, they eventually reaches a GOOD outcome
- 2- IF one cooperates while the other competes, the competitive party WINS and the cooperative party LOOSES
- 3- If both parties compete then they both get a *MEDIOCRE outcome*.

This means that both parties are better off cooperating. However faced with uncertainty, one party is never sure of his opponent's strategic decision, leaving him at the risk of an unreciprocated cooperation and so at risk of losing.

So is one better off competing even if mutual cooperation yields a better output?

Lax concludes (1986) that *"Thus acting on a rational calculation of their individual best interests' causes the parties to forego cooperative gains, and actually leaves them worse off than they could have*

been. In real negotiations these choices present themselves at each stage, and the line between creating and claiming tactics is not clear cut. The authors suggest that the negotiator's dilemma can be seen as a metaphor for understanding the general tension between cooperative and competitive strategies".

While the above puts a clear incentive on the competitive choices, the literature clearly states that there is no hard evidence of superiority for either strategic choices: the cooperative (also named the win-win strategy) or the competitive (also named the win-lose strategy).

Having said so, this does not mean that the literature stands neutral toward these two groups of strategies. As a matter of fact many authors, among which Fisher, Patton et Ury (2000); David Lax et James Sebenius (1986) support the idea that while the above is very true, the need: “ *to believe that it's in your interest to look for ways to benefit your negotiating counterpart. Your goal is not to hurt them, but to help them at little cost to yourself – and have them help you at little cost to them. The most creative you are at coming up with things that are good for both of you the happier both of you will be*”.

The above quote summarizes the essence of cooperation we now move to when cooperation is appropriate and how to stimulate and maintain cooperation in the organizational context we are living in today.

Part 2: When is cooperation occurring in organizations?

Scholars and business professionals alike have long recognized that cooperation is a key component of organizational success. Organizations themselves have long been conceptualized as systems of cooperative effort and coordinated activity (Barnard, 1938). While some researchers focus on individuals' motives for working together when they define cooperation (Mead, 1976), others also focus on relational behaviors, such as exchanging and combining information, ideas, and other resources; giving assistance or helping; constructively discussing problems and conflicts; and supporting and encouraging each other (Argyle, 1991; Tjosvold, 1998). Cooperation is a social behavior. When people cooperate, they act in ways that advance or potentially advance each other's interests. Sometimes they benefit personally, and sometimes they do not. Cooperation may fall within or extend beyond job roles (Milton et al., 2005).

In these systems, leaders and members of work groups are judged by how well they cooperate to deliver the results organizations and their environments demand. Those who adeptly develop and help others to develop cooperative relationships are poised for success, as are the organizations that employ them. Yet, despite how important and rewarding cooperation can be, evidence suggests that it continues to evade many organizations.

There is a clear and strong need for research illuminating “the conditions that give rise to naturally occurring cooperation” in organizations (Smith et al, 1995). The work by Stephen J. Derry and Roderick D. Iverson, 2005 is an example of research that answers this need. They propose a simplified model (figure 2) of the organization as a set of systems and processes. Although it is focused on union-management relations and their impact on a cooperative labor relations climate, we believe it illustrates a more general case: there are numerous sources from which cooperation can naturally emerge in an organization. We do not intend to over-analyze the model, but only to focus on the role of cooperation and its importance, if any, on organizational performance. It is clear from the figure 2 that cooperation plays a very important role, either directly stated “cooperation”, or through many derivate attributes to cooperation such as “ensure good relation” and “integrative bargaining approach”. Cooperation is all over the model, all over the organization, and it insists on the positive relationship between cooperation and organizational performance.

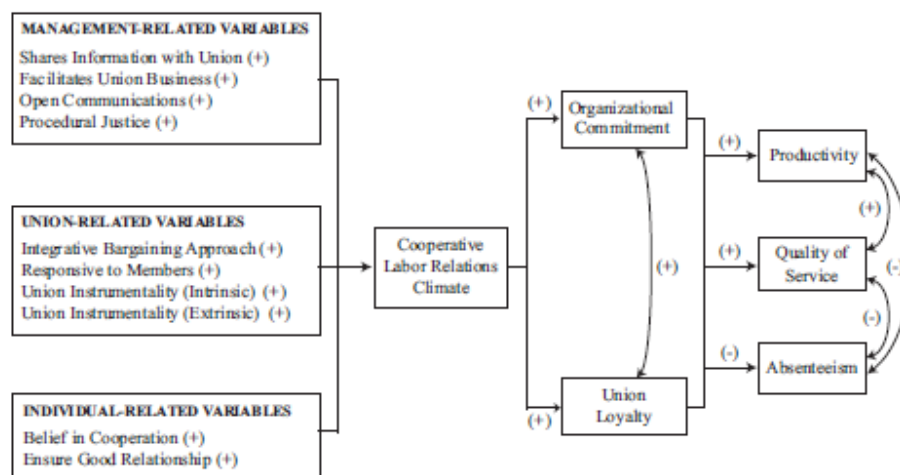


Figure 2. Causal Model of Organizational Performance, Derry and Iverson, 2005

In figure 2, the author categorizes three types of variables that can lead to cooperation. Management (Management Variables) is a source of cooperation if managers share information

with transparency. Unions, by being more responsive and integrating also lead to fostering cooperation. The unions in this model could be replaced by customers, suppliers, distributors, ... For each of these different stakeholders conditions can also exist for the occurrence of cooperation. The last category of variables in figure 2 are individual variables. It is with individuals that the choice to cooperate or not lies, which brings us back to the dilemmas explained in part one.

To sum up, the model mentioned above proves that the organization in itself can enable the occurrence of cooperation. Management by understanding this can capitalize these sources to increase cooperation.

However, so far, in part 2 we looked at how an organizational context could foster cooperation. This is a limitation as a context is never static and given. This is why, in part 3, we turn to how a negotiator can act make the context more appropriate for cooperation.

Part 3: how can the negotiator make the context more appropriate for negotiation

As regards this question, the literature indicates that it is linked to the concept of framing. We found two interesting opposing framing perspectives: positive and negative framing of the issue to be negotiated. Positive framing asks “how to promote cooperation” while negative framing asks “How to overcome cooperation vulnerabilities (which may be the reason behind why people do not cooperate)”. Table 2 identifies which authors are linked with which framing perspective. Table 3 sums up their recommendations.

Scope	Positive Framing
How to promote cooperation?	
Axelrod (1984)	
Ury and Fisher (1981)	
Basadur (2000)	
Buskens&Weesie (2000)	
Scope	Negative Framing
How to overcome cooperation vulnerabilities?	
Sebenius and Lax (1986)	
Ury and Fisher (1991)	
Abell&Reynier (2000)	
Raub&Weesie (2000)	
Hegslman&Flashe (2000)	
Edk Group (2000)	

Table 2, Positive and Negative Framing Analysis

	Authors		Recommendations
1	Robert Axelrod	1984	The shadow of the future Exchanging gains Teach individual to take care one another Teach reciprocity Increase the capacity of appreciation
2	Sebenius& Lax	1986	Choice of negotiation philosophy Breaking up the process and channeling it toward cooperation Invoking repeated dealings Making cooperation norms salient Socialization
3	Ury& Fisher	1981	Separate people from the problem Focus on interest not position Invent options for mutual gain Insist upon objective evaluation criteria
4		1991	Don't react See the problem from their side Re-frame the negotiation Build a bridge Bring him to his sense, not his knees
5	Basadur et al.	2000	The Simplex Process for cooperation generation: it's a three-phase process of creative problem solving and innovative thinking that helps you solve complex problems. Process skills enhancement : that is the system recognizes that everyone is creative and that everyone contributes to the creative process in different ways
6	Robert Axelrod	2000	Six new tested variables to promote cooperation in the PD paradigm, building on the "Theory of Cooperation": Timing of choices; Abdell&Reynier, 2000 Hostage; Raub&Weesie, 2000 Social Network; Buskens&Weesie, 2000 Adaptive Play; HegsIman&Flashe, 2000 Envy; Lehna, 2000 Exit; Edk Group, 2000

Table 3, Authors Scope Summary

Let us look deeper into this content. In order to do this, we compared and contrasted the recommendations of the authors and identified, using their own terminology, the list of variables that were the most repeated across time. This is summarized in table 4.

	Variables	Authors	Example
1	Reciprocity	Axelrod (1984) Sebenius& Lax (1986) Abell&Reynier (2000) Buskens&Weesie (2000)	The shadow of the future Evoking repeated deals Hostage Social Network
2	Negotiation Education	Axelrod (1984) Sebenius& Lax (1986) Basadur (2000)	Teaching individuals the value of the other Teaching individuals the norms of cooperation Teaching the cooperation norm
3	Negotiation as a Process	Sebenius& Lax (1986) Basadur (2000)	Breaking up the process and channel it toward cooperation The Simplex process
4	Strategy re-invention	Axelrod (1984) Sebenius& Lax (1986) Ury and Fisher (1981; 1991) Lehn (2000) Edk Group (2000)	Moderate and Sophisticated Envy strategies Exit Strategy
5	Value of Relationship	Axelrod (1984) Sebenius& Lax (1986) Ury and Fisher (1981; 1991) Buskens&Flashe (2000)	The appreciation of the other Socialization Building the other a bridge Social Network

Table 1, Authors Crossing

Let us now look at each variable in table 4.

The 1st variable in the table is reciprocity which could be reworded as “give and take”. The variable stresses out that by initiating cooperation, your opponent will be invited to return cooperation. An example from the literature to illustrate this is “the shadow of the future”. It means that during a business transaction, the negotiator will highlight the fact that this is not a hit and run operation. He will insist, on the contrary, that he (his company) has the intention to make this business opportunity a long term partnership. This should elicit from the other side a cooperative attitude to ensure good will from his side.

The second variable is education to negotiation: the authors stress the need to incorporate cooperative values in the education systems to install it in individual behaviors more naturally. Of course the younger the age at which the value is introduced, the most integrated it will be. Nonetheless, via professional education adults can also be taught the value and importance of cooperation for a more conscious choice (Soliman, Stimec, Antheaume, 2014).

The third variable is to consider negotiation as a process. This should help individuals evaluate the input, the output and their performance. If done properly, individuals will be able to control better their performance and increase cooperation strategy choices.

The fourth variable is strategy re-invention. It consists in the redeployment of certain strategies in a different way to insist on obtaining cooperation. An example is the exit strategy. You can exit competitively to create pressure but you can also exit to avoid competition, and to insist on cooperation.

The fifth variable is the value of relationship: as stressed by many authors, when the relationship is important, a cooperative strategy is not a choice but rather a must. To keep and nurture a long term relationship, cooperation is the only available road. Competitive behavior ruins relationships. So for example, through socialization and building networks the value of the relationship that will result should bond both parties to a cooperative negotiation.

Building on all the above we propose something new. Reading in between the lines, we found that there is an implicit message as to why people do not negotiate cooperatively. The cause seems to be lack of knowledge. If all the above was widely known we could expect more rational cooperative choices.

Part 4: Conclusion and Recommendation: Negotiation training as a way to promote cooperation in negotiation

I. CONCLUSION OF THE LITERATURE FINDINGS:

Under different titles and wording the authors emphasize the impact of negotiation knowledge on the management of the negotiator's dilemma. However, none of the researches offered a direct investigation of the impact of knowledge increase on: the negotiator's behavior and cooperation strategy promotion.

Again let's recapitulate the central question from the previous sections: Why do people cooperate?

We return to the most cited authors we have reviewed above, and summed up the answers we have found. We do not pretend that the below list is exhaustive, but within the limits of our access, reach and capabilities here are our results summarized in table (5) below.

Why do people not cooperate			
1	Axelrod	1984	Individuals have not been taught the value of the other, as well as reciprocity concept
2	Sebenius and Lax	1986	Individuals have not been taught of the norm of cooperation
3	Ury and Fisher	1981/91	People don't know better than to compete, in other words people can be taught to cooperate
4	Basadur	2000	This does not say why people do not cooperation Negotiation is a thinking process that not only can be taught, but has to be. And with increase complexity in negotiation there is an increase need of knowledge
5	Tenbergen	2001	People compete as a result of lack of knowledge
6	Moore et al	1989	Learning process plays a vital role in negotiation, but it is often neglected
7	Lipman	1986	Cooperation results of a level of awareness, knowledge.
8	Simon	1982	Increase knowledge...increases negotiators rationality to deliver better choices
9	Lax and Senebius	1986	Players cooperate when they know.

Table 2, Negotiation Knowledge Across Authors

The analysis of the content of table 5 puts a strong accent on the value and positive impact of negotiation education (knowledge) on the negotiation performance output as well as the cooperative strategy deployment.

These above findings were the reason behind our work, Soliman, Stimec and s Antheaume, 2014, "The Long Term Impact of Negotiation Training and Teaching Implications" (CRQ, 2014) in which we have further tested the negotiation education variable, and within the limits of our field work population and duration of evaluation, our findings confirmed positive correlation. In addition to uncovering negotiation learning patterns, differences in learning appropriate resulting from the different negotiators profiles. Leading to an additional layer of negotiation education complexity.

II. PAPER CONCLUSION

We live in an era where everything is run by organizations. For education we refer to organizations, for health issues we refer to organizations, for recreation we refer to organizations, for every aspect in our lives as individuals, as citizens, we refer to organizations.

The quality of our lives and potential of our future generations depends on how effective, efficient and smart these organizations are. As introduced above, the global economic, political, social, cultural and even natural environmental has created a very complex reality for these organizations to exist in.

Organizations are under the pressure of continuous development, change, innovation and adaptation to the context dictated by this highly dynamic, unstable and uncertain new environment.

To cope many organizations adopted a competitive strategy. This has only increased the severity of the context. The above literature shows enough evidence that organization rescue strategy falls in its success to install cooperative strategies in its inter and intra organization reaching agreements culture, in other words in its negotiations.

We highly stress that the success of the organization of today and citizen happiness of tomorrow will depend on its capacity to develop, enhance and maintain a cooperative culture as a strategic choice in managing the environment with its new definition.

The implementation for the organization can start with professional education: negotiation training. None the less organizations can also join forces with other culture shaping participants to reinforce cooperation value beyond the organizational walls. The objective is shaping a future where cooperation is a way of living in the larger society.

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